

ABC WORLD NEWS TONIGHT
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NORWAY/KGB
AGENT

JENNINGS: In South Africa today, a former police commissioner told the story of how a one-time hitman for the KGB ended up in South Africa with asylum and a new identity. It was fairly simple. The man had defected to West Germany and had information about the KGB which South Africa wanted. Simple, fair exchange. Well, we have the first of a two-part series tonight on what makes someone work for the KGB, someone, that is, who is not a Soviet citizen. In a report from Europe, our chief foreign correspondent, Pierre Salinger, examines the making of a Soviet agent in Norway.

SALINGER: This is the anatomy of a classic KGB recruitment case. It's central character was born here in this relatively poor farming region of Norway on Dec. 13, 1942. It was at the time that his country was occupied by Nazi Germany and ruled by Norway's first major 20th century traitor (INAUDIBLE). His name? Arnie ~~Traholtz~~ ^{TREHOLT}. In 41 years, through intelligence and drive, he propelled himself to the highest levels of Norwegian politics and government. Some even said he would be Norway's next foreign minister. Now, he is locked up here on the ninth floor of Oslo's principal police station, subject to daily interrogation to learn how he began Scandinavian's most dangerous spy since the end of World War II, and another major Norwegian traitor. Coming from this peaceful rural atmosphere, Traholtz' early life was quiet and normal. Son of a Labor Party politician, he entered the University of Oslo in 1963, where he majored in political science and became chairman of the university's Labor Party student organization. The Vietnam War did more than create mass protests in the United States. Here in Europe, it served as a catalyst for the birth of a militant student movement, distinguished for its Marxist-Leninist orientations and its anti-Americanism. The KGB profited from this climate, pinpointing potential leaders and recruiting them to the service of the Soviet Union. Einer Forde, one of Arnie Traholtz' old friends, says he was highly intelligent and fitted the pattern Soviet agents were seeking. FORDE (Norwegian Labor Party): I would say that the most significant ideological thing about him was probably anti-Americanism, especially during the Vietnam War.

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SALINGER: In 1966, the Soviet Union assigned one of its top agents, Viktor *Brushko, to its Oslo embassy. His first target: Oslo University. Traholtz was there, but so was Arald Isseg, who was to become a top Norwegian defense ministry and NATO official. The KGB went for Isseg first. ISSEG: Of the new breed of Moscow officials or officers, the KGB spread a wide net in what we call a charm offensive, in a sort of talent-scouting operation aimed at identifying possible agent material--individuals that might be expected to rise to some position where they could eventually become of use to the KGB.

SALINGER: *Brushko offered Isseg \$400 to do a first assignment, a lot of money at that time for a young student, but he turned it down. He would have been a good catch. Brushko also made an unsuccessful pass at a leading Norwegian journalist, Jon Otto Johanssen. JOHANSEN (Norwegian Radio Reporter): Well, he left a note, a 1,000-crown note in my typewriter. I called him, and I met him in a restaurant. I wanted to give it back. He refused. So, I had to burn the note in his face in a public place.

SALINGER: But Traholtz, who lived here with his first wife at the time, fell under Brushko's net at the end of 1967 or early 1968. What were the motives behind his decision to work for the Soviets? ISSEG: We find elements of all the classical motives of this pillage--money, ideology, fascination of the game.

SALINGER: Less than 10 years later, Traholtz was in Moscow helping negotiate a crucial treaty with the Soviets. A Soviet spy dealing with his spy masters. This classic KGB recruitment would yield the Soviets an extraordinary harvest of Western defense secrets. Pierre Salinger, ABC News, Oslo.

JENNINGS: Tomorrow night, how Traholtz was uncovered and how much damage he may have done.